1:Beaglehole and Beaglehole E-5 (1934-5)1938 Pukapukans

while died and it is presumed that this child will continue indefinitely to live with his own parents while being considered a member of the adopting father's lineage. In a third case, the reason is the illness of both adopting parents. In another, the adopting father is a very old man, unable to care for the child. He had previously also adopted the child's father, who lived with him as a boy. A further case did not involve a change of residence on the part of the adopted child because the adopting father is the husband of the child's maternal grandmother, with whom the child's unmarried mother lives. The reason given in two other cases is the death of the adopting parent or his wife. In the remaining five cases, involving eleven *tama hokoti*, no explanation could be offered by informants, though it is likely that the personal preferences of the blood and adopting parents were deciding factors.

Generally the *tama hokoti* is adopted before birth:

When a couple decides to adopt, they go to the selected parents at the time the mother is about three months pregnant. They say: "We wish to adopt this child as a *tama hokoti*," and then specify whether the sex of the child will make any difference. The blood parents discuss the matter with the paternal and maternal grandparents and with their bilateral kinship groups, to see if there is any objection to breaking a descent line, or whether any other friend or relative has a prior claim on the child. If agreement is reached, the adopting parents are informed, and from this time on they are required to feed the pregnant mother with the best of foods and to make special provision for her family whenever there is a food division.

The child's birth takes place in the house of the blood father, unless the house of the adopting father is close by, in which event delivery may take place in that house. Both adopting parents are present at the delivery as a matter of course, because of the fiction that it is really their child that is being born. All the relatives of the adopting parents make a point of being present for the same reason. It is the adopting group that renders all the necessary assistance to the parturient woman. The blood father and relatives may also be present, but only as onlookers who take no part in the confinement proceedings. After the child's birth, the adopting parents continue to be responsible for the mother and for the child. They provide the birth feast and the names for the new child.

Thereafter the mother nurses the child, who remains with her exclusively until time for weaning. Food gifts to the mother continue throughout the feeding period. At weaning, the adopting parents take formal possession of their child. A small feast marks the handing over; the adopting parents make gifts of valuables, pearl-shell hooks, malos, etc., to the blood group. This completes the adoption, and henceforth the child lives with the adopting parents. The blood parents give up all control over the child, and the child in turn assumes all the duties and responsibilities of its position as *tama hokoti* to the adopting parents.

As distinguished from a *tama hokoti*, the feeding child (*tama uungai*) goes without ceremony to live with the adopting parents, who feed him. He helps his feeding parents, and brings to their household the food shares he receives from the village divisions. The relationship begins when the child is sent to relatives to be weaned:

Through a mixture of personal and economic motives, relatives may decide to keep a feeding child with them. The matter is discussed with the blood parents and decided upon, usually an easy matter, as no change of lineage membership is involved. The child remains a member of his home village. If he is taken by relatives in another village, he brings to this household foods in which the adopting village is deficient. Thus the adopting parents participate in a supply of food that would otherwise be denied them. If the adopting parents come to favor the feeding child, they make arrangements to have

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maternal lineage of the maternal grandmother. I have on record no actual instances of this arrangement, for which informants could give no native name.

The status of an adopted child in a family is the same as that of a blood child. The precise kinship terms applied to the parent-child relationship are *tama kokoti* or *tama wangai*, and *matua kokoti* or *tave* or *matua wangai*. These are rarely used save for the sake of pedantic exactness in the discussion of genealogies. In fact, the *tama kokoti* is considered to be the child of the adopting parents in everything save the accident of conception and parturition, though here the fiction is that the adopting parents are sociologically the parents even during gestation. The adopting parents are *matua*, and the child is *tama*, in the full sociological sense of the kinship terms. The child loses all status, kinship and sociological, in relation to his blood family. All kinship ties established by birth are broken, and new kinship obligations are formulated according to the relationships of his adopting parents. As the child grows up, he may be permitted to visit his blood parents, whom of course, he soon learns to know; he may help with their work, or care for them in sickness. But it is to the adopting parents that the child owes primary obligations, and on whom he is supposed to lavish his care and affection.

Because of the complete sociological break brought about by adoption it is regarded as the blackest treachery for the blood parents, through motives of natural affection or economic advantage, to encourage the child to visit them. Some parents are known to do this by putting the child when he visits them, by saving choice titbits for him, and by treating him with a more lavish display of affection than he receives from his adoptive parents. Such actions are resented by the adoptive parents who expect the blood parents to do nothing to revive blood ties. If a child goes to them they should send him away, resorting to violence if necessary, to show the child that he is unwanted. Similarly, adoptive parents are fully justified in severely whipping an adopted child who persists in visiting his blood parents. No punishment less than manslaughter is considered too drastic for the child who deserts his adoptive parents. If, in spite of punishment, ties of blood and affection are so strong that the child ultimately deserts his adoptive parents, as in fact sometimes happens, then there is nothing for the adoptive parents to do but to moralise on the iniquity of human nature or try adopting another child.

KINSHIP

Pukapukan kinship terms are listed in table 7. Beyond the fact that there is much confusion in the minds of informants today as to the exact extension of certain terms, particularly of those characterizing avoidance

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602 The consciousness of the breaking of a tapu is clear from the man's remark in this chant that his love for his *tuale atua* is *kai kamanga* (food of shameful abnormality) 835 and, further, *kai tuakoga* (incest).

No reference to *tuale atua* incest is found in any of the myths or folktales recorded.

182 The kinship tapus are best preserved today among the older people. 602 Among the younger generations, several *tuale atua* have married:

In one such marriage, the husband had to trick his protesting relatives by being 538 secretly married. This was only possible because the Cook Islands Act allows *tuale atua* 177 to marry, and the resident agent had to perform the civil rite. Another marriage occurred just before we left Pukapuka. The bride's mother's brother refused to attend the marriage or to have anything further to do with his classificatory daughter. The groom's father at first objected because he feared the marriage would be sterile, probably owing to the breaking of the tapu, and his descent line depended on issue to the marriage. His fear was increased by the fact that though his son had been courting the bride for several years, no child had been born. The father finally yielded to the entreaties of missionary friends. Wiseacres predict that the marriage will be sterile, which is the very least that can be hoped for, apart altogether from visitations of sickness.

602 No purpose is served by traversing at this stage the actual functioning of the kinship system. It presents no features that call for special comment. Economic obligations associated with kinship relationships are discussed elsewhere. Similarly the importance of the kinship group in personal ceremonial is mentioned in the description of rites at birth, marriage, and death.

THE LIFE CYCLE

BIRTH

Conception

842 Conception is known as *te nuhutiinga o te tama* (the placing in of the child). The period of gestation is called *te nuhuiihiinga* or *te ikonga*. The primary meaning of the word *iko* is "to germinate" as in the sentence: "Ko te nena ko iko ai te tama" (it is the semen which makes the child germinate). The following is a typical explanation of conception given by a woman informant:

842 Conception involves an organ (*manea*) in both the male and female (*manea* is given 831 elsewhere as meaning "lung"). The male secretion enters the female *manea*, the female 753 secretion enters the male *manea*. The informant was unable to specify the exact location 833 of this organ, though she thought the native practitioners would know. On being pressed to indicate the locus of the *manea* in her own body, she pointed to her stomach and said the *manea* was close to it. She knew that it is the semen that germinates the ovum, but could give no rationalization as to the method. She also said that it is the *manea* which generates the male and female secretions, and should this organ dry up, as it often does, then the person affected becomes thin and sickly, suffering from debility. This is a common disease in Pukapuka according to informant, one cause of which is too frequent copulation. Five or six times in succession on the same day or night, informant explained, would be too frequent.

842 The theory of conception was discussed with Pau, a native medicine man. His theory is that the semen of the man congeals the blood in the uterus of the woman. This

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842 827 steps the monthly period and creates the fetus. If the fetus is male, it is formed mainly from the semen. If the fetus is female, it is formed mainly from the blood of the female. If the child when born partakes strongly of the likeness of the father and the mother, then it has been formed equally from the semen and the blood of the mother. The best time for conception, according to Pau, is immediately after the menstrual period, never before; common opinion, however, has no ideas as to whether one part of the monthly cycle is more or less favorable to conception than another.

843 787 The recognised sign of conception is cessation of the menses, invariably accompanied by the mother's having a *miti mahatiti tangata* (conception dream) of a coconut tree full of nuts, or of a fruitful talo patch, or of blossoming flowers or blooming trees. A later indication recognised is the darkening of the nipples. The sign for the father is a *miti mahatiti tangata* of a flock of birds. When a man has this dream he tells his wife of it and asks her to confirm the fact of her pregnancy. Pau said that the god of the lineage sends these dreams to the parents or to relatives of the couple, and they are sure signs of pregnancy.

[828]

843 Gestation is reckoned as taking ten full moons to complete. Delivery is to be expected on the tenth moon after conception takes place. A woman refers to the moon in which she expects confinement as her *mahangaulu* (tenth). No mnemonic device is used in the moon count.

842 No contraceptive methods are known, nor is there a belief in the possibility of contraception.

No medicine or therapy is known that will enable a sterile woman to have children. The only cause of sterility and hence the only cure is psychological:

> All the reasons adduced for specific cases of sterility relate to the primary cause that the woman, or her husband, has a bad heart (*ngakau hino*). In order to have children, the woman must be humble and obedient to her husband, faithful in thought and deed, not given to affairs with other men, and sincerely anxious to have children, upon which she must concentrate all her thoughts, during all her waking life. From this point of view, a Pukapukan woman is considered sterile (*tamaine punga*, woman of stem) not only if she has not had children, but if she has borne no more than one or two, or again, if, having had a child by a first marriage, she has remarried and has had no more children. According to informant's classification, the cultural ideal may be carried so far as to consider sterile a woman who has had four children, all by her first husband, and all of whom have died. The cultural attitude to sterility is best illustrated by the remark made by a young man (*lopa*) to a sterile woman. It was on the evening following a big food division, when a group of young people were sitting about discussing the way the food had been divided. Chiding a childless woman of 35, the young man said: "What a pity to make a division of food for a woman without children. All she is good for is to *tiitke* (evacuate)." It is good to give a full division to a woman with children, because then the food goes to make more children, but if the woman is sterile, the food is wasted.

Pregnancy

843 Nausea after eating is common at the beginning of pregnancy. Another illness that marks pregnancy is the formation of an abscess on the abdomen. This is likely to occur in the second month. Not only is the pregnancy also

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843 ing her with more fish than he otherwise would. But her work is not lightened by outside assistance during her pregnancy.

Sex of the Child

842 787 Methods of determining the sex of a child before its birth are based on observations of the mother's abdomen and on dream. If the pregnant woman's abdomen is small and extends outward in front, she is thought to be carrying a female child. If her abdomen is large and fat at the sides with predominant lateral extension, her child is a male child. If the mother or any of her relatives has a dream of talo during the period of gestation, it is taken as a sign that the child will be a girl. But if the dream is of a coconut tree, a male child is to be born. Somewhat similarly, a dream of a beautiful bird means that the child, male or female, will resemble the bird in beauty; a dream of a white man means that the child will be of fair skin.

842 There seems to be no cultural pattern of sex preference either for the first-born or for later children. A man wants his first-born to be a son; a woman wants a daughter. A family of children of alternating sexes (*poli tuvalovaloaki*), with either a boy or girl as the first-born, is generally preferred to a family of boys only (*poli tane*), or to a family of girls only (*poli wawine*), or to a family of first boys and then girls, or vice versa. The pros and cons of having more boys than girls, or more girls than boys, were discussed by informants Veti and Talainga in a sort of informal debate. Veti is the father of three boys and a girl, all adult. Talainga, having had no children of his own, adopted a little girl (despite his alleged preference for sons). Their discussion is summarized thus:

Talainga speaks first: The desirable children are sons. I would not like to have daughters because they stop for only a short time beneath the roof of the father. When a girl marries, her husband takes her away to another house, and she is so caught up in the ties of the other household that she is lost to her father for good. On the other hand, a son stays at home, and when the father is old and weak the son will take care of him. The son's wife comes as a new person to the house. There there are many sons, there are many wives who, with all their relatives, make many hands to assist in the work of the household. When the father is dead, it is the son who carries on the family line, whereas the daughter's children belong to the paternal lineage of another. Most men prefer their first-born to be a male. This gives more certainty to succession, it means that the paternal descent line will not be lost, whether the following children are male or female. It continues—bar accidents—the genealogical record, whereas daughters break the record and continue another line. Because of accidents, it is always well to have more sons than daughters. The descent line would be lost by a generation of daughters only, for the children of daughters go to the lineage of their father.

But something must be said for the point of view of the mother: she would be glad to have the first child a female, for this increases her status with the maternal lineage, assures continuation of descent within the lineage, and finally, gives the mother more help about the house as long as the child stays at home.

By having more sons than daughters, a man gets more food shares from various

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842 types of food divisions (for work activities) than by having plenty of daughters to share in the wealth of the maternal lineage.

Veti says on this matter: my ideal family would be composed of equal numbers of male and female children. I would like daughters to assist in the work of the house while they are young and unmarried. I would like them for the food shares they bring in. Even though daughters are nominally lost to the family when they marry out and go to live elsewhere, nevertheless the system is so flexible that their husbands can generally be relied on to help with food and work when the occasion demands. A son is necessary, especially a first-born son, so that the name of the family can be handed down to later generations.

As long as the daughters do not marry early, the father is assured that their food shares will be brought into the house for a reasonably long time. Whereas the adult son may get independent, go to live elsewhere, and take his food shares away from the house from an early age, a daughter would rarely be so independent. If the unmarried daughter has children, these remain with their mother's father if he so desires and insists, even though the daughter later goes elsewhere to live with the man she marries. These "illegitimate" children bring in more food shares to his household, and thus increase his wealth and status in the community.

[848]

Whatever prospective parents may prefer their child to be, no method is known to influence its sex. They can only fervently hope that the child will be what they desire. They may express their hope aloud in such words as, "Pi pe te tama tama e wai tama-wawine!" (If only our child will be a girl!)

Delivery

844 The pregnant woman continues to live in the house of her husband or father, if she is unmarried, up to the time of her confinement. When she feels labor pains (*mahutinga* or *mahutakataka*) she goes outside to the back of the house, if this is a quiet place, and lies down on a mat or coconut sheet placed on the ground.

No coconut cream or other purgative is given before labor to clear the lower bowel. In delivery, the parturient woman sits on the ground with her legs stretched out and apart in front of her. Should this position become uncomfortable, she changes to a squatting position. But she soon resumes the preferred sitting position. A medicine man specializing in obstetrics (*tangata mahuunua*) or, failing him, any close male relative, sits in the same position behind her; she may also sit on his outstretched legs. The parturient woman is further assisted by another adult, usually a woman, mother or mother's sister, who squats in front of her and leans forward, pressing her hands down on the parturient woman's knees, thus giving her support in her straining movements (*kokononga*). When the baby comes (*to*, falls) it is taken either by the mother herself or else by the attendant in front of her. To help the woman in delivery, the *tangata mahuunua* applies physical therapy (*papangi te tou muli*), pushing with the heel or the palm of the hand on the small of her back. If the baby appears to be coming out feet first, it is turned (*wawauli*) before delivery, by external digital manipulation of the abdomen.

845 Delayed childbirth or prolonged labor pains (*yapu lahois*) are believed to result
983 from the woman's having copulated with another man after she became pregnant by the blood father of her child. When relatives hear of the hard labor, they gather about the parturient woman and urge her to confess (*fitiu*) all her sexual sins (*yala*). She is expected to confess in great detail from the first to the latest sexual irregularity. Only then can the child be delivered. An unmarried mother is also expected to confess all her sexual irregularities, giving the names of all the men with whom she has had intercourse, together with a list of all other sins she has committed. Confession is followed

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121 present itself regarding the factors bearing upon the development of personality differences.

The following material in no sense represents the fulfilment of a somewhat ambitious project. Owing to various exigencies of fieldwork[1] over which we had no control it was neither possible to study Pukapukan children with the detail they deserved, nor solve all the problems and hypotheses which we took with us into the field. Enough material was collected, however, to prove without doubt the fruitfulness of this aspect of Sapir's approach to the problems of personality. Some of this material is summarized here. If it raises more problems than it suggests answers to, this again is but tribute to Sapir's scientific acumen. After all, no new scientific approach is worth much unless it, at one and the same time, both suggests questions that should be asked and opens up wide fields of investigation. The sterile problem is the one that can most easily be answered.

II

842 The process of growing up in Pukapuka, as viewed from the vantage point of custom and
573 institution, is for the average child an uneventful and straight-forward business. Children
848 are eagerly desired by almost all parents. Male children are necessary to establish the continuity of descent and lineage. Both male and female children provide a form of old age insurance. Both, too, help to increase the flow of food into the family that results from regularly recurring village food divisions. Both sexes are also desired because the Pukapukan has real love and affection for children in themselves. The child of an unmarried mother is at no particular disadvantage. His maternal grandparents welcome the infant, giving him social status in the community. When his mother marries, as she surely will after thus establishing irrefutable proof of her child-bearing abilities, her child is almost always adopted by her husband and thus given paternal lineage status.

853 The new-born child is taken to the sea and washed, then oiled and wrapped in soft pan-
846 danus nuts. For two or more days until the mother's milk comes the child is fed on coconut cream whenever it cries. For the first few days of life also the infant is cradled in the arms of female relations most of the day and night. It is given the breast whenever it cries. The mother sits while nursing, the child cuddled in her arms. Feeding is a leisurely procedure. The child is not hurried in any way but is allowed to satisfy itself fully and doze off to sleep still at the breast. When the infant is older it is held upright to nurse, its feet resting on the mother's lap. Older infants still adopt any attitude in feeding from the breast that suits them. Soft coconut flesh is introduced into the infant's diet at an early age, never however as a substitute for the leisurely and warm intimacy of breast feeding. The infant, though never left alone whether sleeping or awake, is rarely carried about. The mother remains inactive
854 for some weeks after delivery. Thereafter when she participates more fully in gardening and
857 domestic duties she leaves her child within the house in the care of an older child or female relative. The infant is carried about only when the guardian is a young girl who cannot resist

[1] Fieldwork was carried out on the Polynesian atoll of Pukapuka, one of the northern Cook group, for seven and a half months. The culture has been described in some detail in Ernest and Pearl Beaglehole, *Ethnology of Pukapuka* (Bulletin, Bernice P. Bishop Museum, No. 150, 1938).